

Factors Affecting Prospective Students in Choosing Local Private University

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Abstract: *The intense competition of the higher education industry in Indonesia has a considerable impact on prospective students choosing Private Universities. With this research, we can determine the main factors affecting prospective students by distributing questionnaires to 950 prospective students of XYZ University as a sample. This study used a quantitative descriptive method with 15 variables grouped into seven factors: product factors, physical evidence factors, price factors, location factors, reference group factors, motivational factors, and personal factors. From these seven factors, the affordable location factor is the most influential factor for prospective students deciding to study at XYZ University.*

Keywords: *Determining factors, decision, XYZ university, local, private*

Abstrak: Persaingan ketat industri pendidikan tinggi di Indonesia berdampak cukup besar pada calon mahasiswa memilih Perguruan Tinggi Swasta. Dengan penelitian ini dapat diketahui faktor-faktor utama yang mempengaruhi calon mahasiswa dengan menyebarkan angket kepada 950 calon mahasiswa Universitas XYZ sebagai sampel. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode deskriptif kuantitatif dengan 15 variabel yang dikelompokkan menjadi tujuh faktor yaitu faktor produk, faktor bukti fisik, faktor harga, faktor lokasi, faktor kelompok acuan, faktor motivasi, dan faktor personal. Dari ketujuh faktor tersebut, faktor lokasi yang terjangkau merupakan faktor yang paling berpengaruh terhadap calon mahasiswa dalam memutuskan studi di Universitas XYZ.

Kata Kunci: Faktor penentu, keputusan, universitas XYZ, lokal, swasta

INTRODUCTION

Higher education is pursued by focusing on one concentration of interest and is expected to implement it later in the workplace. Public Universities (PTN) in Indonesia only accommodate prospective students who pass the exam selection simultaneously throughout Indonesia, called Public University Joint Selection Entrance (SBMPTN). At the same time, those who do not pass the exam are an opportunity for the founders of Private Universities (PTS) who also want to provide their educational services to prospective students who do not pass the Public University Joint Selection Entrance (SBMPTN). PTS itself is straightforward to find in every city and province in Indonesia. From many Private Universities competing in Sukabumi, one of them is XYZ University. This XYZ University is a PTS that prospective students quite much favor. This XYZ University has 2 D3 courses, ten undergraduate courses, and one undergraduate course.

XYZ University's existence is the key for lower-level people to be able to study and continue their studies. In addition to providing low tuition fees, XYZ University also provides scholarships for 1,000 students each year while ensuring a high education quality. Based on the background as well as the descriptions that have been presented above, it can be known the problems that will be examined in this study are as follows:

1. What are the factors that influence prospective students deciding to study at XYZ University?
2. Among these factors, which is the dominant factor influencing prospective students' decision to study at XYZ University?

Then, the research objectives of this paper are:

1. To find out the factors affecting the decision of prospective students to study at XYZ University.
2. To find out the dominant factors affecting the decision of prospective students to study at XYZ University.

The benefit of this research are:

1. Benefits for Students/Community. This research is expected to provide additional information to the public considering family members and colleagues in determining private universities.
2. Benefits for Other XYZ Universities/PTS. This research can be used as input and consideration materials for PTS, especially for XYZ University, to develop quality to meet prospective students' needs and desires who will study there.
3. Benefits for Prospective Students. Have an overview to prospective students before deciding to choose XYZ University or another Private University to study and participate in lecture activities.
4. Benefits for Private University Coordinators. It can be used as input and focus in running and building private universities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Higher Education Review

According to Webster's New World Dictionary (1962), education is a process of development and practice that covers aspects of knowledge, skills, and personality, primarily conducted in the

form of educational activity formula covering the process of producing and transferring science conducted by individuals or learning organizations (in Nanang Fatah, 2004).

Universities are organizations in the business of education that produce products in educational services and should be marketed to consumers. According to Ndara Taliziduhu (1998), universities as educational institutions can be seen as a production process. Higher education is education at a higher level than secondary education in the school education pathway. Higher education is an education that becomes the final terminal for someone who has the highest opportunity to learn through school education, according to Dardjowidjojo (1991).

Higher education institutions in Indonesia consist of three categories, which are: State Universities (PTN), Private Universities (PTS), and Official Universities (PTK). These educational institutions are in the form of universities, institutes, colleges, and academies. It consists of a Bachelor (S1), with a Bachelor's degree, Diploma 1 and 2 with an A.Ma, Diploma 3 with an A.Md, Strata 2 or Postgraduate (S2) with a Master Degree, and a Strata 3 (S3) with a Doctorate (Dr), these are based on Taliziduhu (1988)

Consumer Behaviour

"Consumer behavior as a dynamic of interaction between influence and consciousness, behavior, and the environment in which humans exchange aspects of life" Peter and Olson (2013). According to Kotler and Armstrong (2001), consumer buying behavior refers to end-to-end consumers and households who purchase goods and services for personal consumption.

Consumer behavior is the act directly involved in getting, consuming, and spending a product or service, including the decision process that precedes and follows these activities, said Setiadi (quoted in Khodijah and Saino, 2012). According to Hawkins & Mothersbaugh (in Tjiptono, 2004), consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, obtain, use and stop using products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy needs, and impacts. These processes to consumers and society.

The theory of consumer behavior that is more deeply explained by Shiffman et al. (in Tjiptono, 2014), consumer behavior is behavior that consumers pay attention to in seeking, buying, using, evaluating, and ignoring service products or ideas that are expected to satisfy consumers to be able to satisfy their needs by consuming products or services offered.

From those definitions, consumer behavior is the action, and social relationship carried out by individual consumers, groups, and organizations to assess, obtain and use goods and service through an exchange or purchase process that begin with a decision-making process that determines the actions.

Factors Affecting Consumer Behaviour

According to Kotler (2008), factors affecting consumer behavior consist of cultural factors (culture, subculture, social class) that have a broad and profound effect on consumer behavior. Culture is the most critical determinant of desire and behavior. Sub-Culture is an identification of a unique socialization behavior of its members. There are four kinds of sub-cultures which are: national groups, religious groups, racial groups, and groups of geographic areas.

Social class is a relatively homogeneous and permanent division of society arranged hierarchically and whose members share similar values, interests, and behaviors (Kotler, 2000).

Then, the factors are social factors. A consumer's behavior is influenced by social factors such as reference groups, family, and social status. Reference Group According to Kotler (2000), a person consists of all groups that directly influence a person is called membership groups. The family is the smallest community unit whose behavior greatly influences and determines in making the decision. Family as a source of orientation consisting of parent, where a person influences an orientation towards religion, politics, and economy. Status and role are related to one's position in society, and each role played will affect the buyer's behavior.

Then, personal factors, which contribute to consumer behavior consist of age and occupation. Living groups buy goods and services that change during life, and age is physical development. Therefore, the stages of development require different foods and clothing so that they affect purchasing behavior. Economic situation, someone will have a significant influence on product selection. The economic situation consists of disposable income, saving and wealth, and borrowing capacity and attitude toward spending. Lifestyle, the pattern of a person's life in everyday life expressed in the activities, interests, and opinions. Lifestyle describes the whole person who interacts with the environment. Job, consumption patterns related to work equipment, and other needs related to work.

Then, psychological factors that are influenced by motivation will become a motive when those needs have reached a certain level. The motive is a need that is sufficiently pressing a person to pursue satisfaction. Prestige, the process by which individuals select, formulate and interpret input information to create a meaningful picture of the world. Learning, the learning process, explains changes in a person's behavior that arise from experience, and most human behavior is the result of the learning process. In theory, learning is generated through encouragement, stimulation, cues/sign, responses, and reinforcement. Beliefs and establishments are a descriptive thought that someone has about something, whereas an attitude is an organization of motivation, emotional feelings, perceptions, and cognitive processes. Through the action and learning process, people will gain beliefs and attitudes, influencing buyer behavior. Meanwhile, according to Assael (quoted in Khodijah and Saino, 2012), three factors influence consumer behavior, including Consumer Individual, Environmental, and Marketing Mix.

Buying Decision Process

"The stages that buyers go through to reach a buying decision go through five stages, namely: problem recognition, information search, alternative evaluation, buying decision, and post-purchase behavior." Kotler (2000). According to Kotler & Armstrong (2014), purchasing decisions are a stage in the buyer's decision-making process where consumers buy. According to Kotler and Keller (2009), the purchase decision process is a process where consumers go through five stages, which

are Problem recognition, information seeking, Alternative evaluation, Purchase decisions, and Post-purchase behavior, which begin before the actual purchase is made and have an extended impact after that.

According to Engel (2001), Sumarwan (2011), a purchasing decision is to formulating various alternative actions to choose one particular alternative to make a purchase. Marketers need to know who is involved in the buying decision and what role each person plays for many products. It is easy enough to recognize who makes the decisions. The consumers' output stage in making a decision involves two closely related post-purchase activities: Purchasing behavior and post-purchase appraisal. The purpose of these two activities is to increase consumer satisfaction with their purchase. (Schiffman & Kanuk (2007), Kotler & Keller (2009).

RESEARCH METHODS

Research Location

The study took place at XYZ University. Location collection refers to research to determine the factors influencing students to choose a University XYZ.

Data Collection

The data used in this study was obtained through sampling or survey methods. The data obtained is the result of interviews and questionnaires representing the entire population.

Method and Research Type

Researchers used a descriptive method that is quantitative with this type of explanatory research.

Hypotheses

Based on the problems presented, the formulation of this hypothesis is as follows:

1. Factors that influence prospective students' decision in choosing a private college in Sukabumi due to motivational factors, physical evidence of the college, product factors, reference group factors, price factors, and location factors.
2. Factors that influence prospective students' decision in choosing a private college in Sukabumi due to motivational factors, physical evidence of the college, product factors, reference group factors, price factors, and location factors.
3. The affordable location factor is the main factor that influences prospective students in choosing PTS in Sukabumi.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Here are the results of the questionnaire from study respondents:

No.	Factors	Frequency	Percentage
1.	I attended XYZ because of the Good Campus Image	80	80%
2.	Studied at XYZ due to Low Tuition Fees	82	82%
3.	Study at XYZ because there are scholarships	62	62%
4.	Study at XYZ due to Complete Campus Facilities	42	42%
5.	Study at XYZ due to a Comfortable and Safe Campus Environment	75	75%
6.	Study at XYZ because of Qualified Lecturers	75	75%
7.	Study at XYZ because of Friendly Employees	27	27%
8.	Study at XYZ by Own Choice	80	80%
9.	Study at XYZ due to Parental Choice	74	74%
10.	Study at XYZ for Friends	25	25%
11.	Study at XYZ because it is Easy to Get A Job	41	41%
12.	Study at XYZ because you want to be able to go abroad	51	51%
13.	Study at XYZ because There Are Faculties /Departments of Interest	90	90%
14.	Study at XYZ because There Is An Employee Class	50	50%
15.	Study at XYZ due to Affordable Location	96	96%

The questionnaire data results in the table above show that 96 responders or 96% stated that affordable location is the dominant factor that strongly influences prospective students in choosing XYZ University.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that of the 950 questionnaires that have been disseminated,

motivational factors, physical evidence of college, product factors, reference group factors, price factors, and people factors influence the decision of prospective students in choosing a private college in Sukabumi. The lowest responder was 25% with a friend's choice, while 96% stated that affordable location was the dominant factor influencing prospective students in choosing XYZ University.

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